

AOT In Action - Issue 275 - August 3, 2009



Mounument Valley

Message from Director Sherry Henry

Good morning,

Did you know that tourism is the only industry that positively impacts each one of Arizona's 15 counties?

Our industry is such an essential component in both job creation and revenue generation for our state that we must remain committed to helping communities sustain vibrant and healthy economies. By doing, so we can also help them preserve their unique qualities that will be enjoyed for many generations to come.

Last week, we announced the recipients of AOT's Arizona Regional and Rural marketing (ARRM) and EZ Marketing grant programs. These grant programs are truly an investment in Arizona's economic future by providing communities throughout the state the financial support and marketing resources to attract visitors to tourist destinations across Arizona. These grants serve as investments in tourism development that help us increase the opportunity to bring more visitors to our state which will then contribute to Arizona's economic vitality.

For more information, please read the **AOT News** section below.

Have a great week!

AOT News

ARRM and EZ Marketing Grants Released

Last week, AOT announced the recipients of the Arizona Regional and Rural Marketing (ARRM)

and EZ Marketing grant programs (formerly the Teamwork for Effective Arizona Marketing grant program). The agency awarded \$1.1 million in matching grants to tourism organizations and tribal entities around the state for Fiscal Year 2010 (FY 2010).

The ARRM and EZ Marketing grant programs are funding options for statewide communities to use to subsidize advertising efforts, public relations campaigns, research and strategic planning and/or other tourism-related marketing initiatives. These matching grants are an aggressive process with many organizations competing for much-needed advertising and marketing dollars.

This year, AOT received nearly 80 individual and regional applications for the ARRM and EZ Marketing programs. A total of \$1.1 million from AOT's budget has been allocated to fund 78 applications for the FY 2010 grant program. AOT takes great pride in these programs and regards the grants as critical tools to stimulate economic growth and enhance future tourism development.

The grants are awarded to communities, regional tourism partnerships, tribal entities and statewide associations that meet the program requirements and are able to match the requested funds. Seventy-eight communities, including six Native American organizations, will be impacted by the grant awards, which range from \$500 to \$80,000. The total amount of grant award monies to be distributed for FY 2010 is \$1,167,144. Distribution of funds is contingent on AOT's final budget amount.

For more information, contact Glenn Schlottman at 602-364-3727 or via e-mail at gschlottman@azot.gov.

Don't Forget to Keep Posting Your Summer Travel Deals!

AOT, in partnership with the Arizona Hotel & Lodging Association and statewide industry partners, launched our new summer campaign which will run through September. The campaign will showcase the amazing summer travel deals found throughout Arizona. If you want your travel deal promoted, this is your chance! Upload your travel deals and packages to the Travel Deals section of www.azot.gov. There is no charge to list a package on the Travel Deals section.

If you are experiencing issues with uploading your travel deals or have any questions about the process, please contact Johnny Muongpack at 602-364-3710 or via e-mail at amuongpack@azot.gov.

AOT Events

Take Advantage of Discounts for the 12th Annual Arizona Showcase in Hermosillo!

The Arizona Office of Tourism will hold the 12th Annual Arizona Showcase October 8, 2009 in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico. This event promotes fall and holiday shopping, attractions and accommodations throughout the State. The highlight event will be a charity fashion show with local models - specifically targeting high income families and individuals with a strong propensity to travel. The cost to participate varies from \$900 - \$2,500 depending on type of supplier and level of participation, plus travel expenses. The deadline to participate is September 1, 2009. Early booking discounts may apply. Discounts expire August 8, 2009. Please contact Kristy Swanson at 602-364-3696 or via e-mail at kswanson@azot.gov.

Upcoming Events & Activities

Japanese Receptive Operator Sales Mission (West Coast)

Date: August 6

Location: Torrance, California

Mexico Sales Mission

Dates: August 31 - September 4

Location: Morelia, San Luis Potosi, Aguascalientes and Zacatecas

Industry News

Starwood Offering up to 50% off Some Rooms

Starwood Hotels & Resorts, one of the largest hotel groups in the world, is deeply discounting rooms at hundreds of its properties, sparking concern that the cuts could trigger a rate-slashing war in the midst of an unprecedented downturn in for the industry. >>[Read Full Article](#)

New Documentary Features National Parks

As the National Park Service readies for its close-up this fall in Ken Burn's new documentary, "The National Parks: America's Best Idea." The frenzy of attention sure to accompany the series will fix a spotlight on the size of the Grand Canyon and on the country's famed wilderness areas like Yellowstone and Yosemite. >>[Read Full Article](#)

Hotel Guest Satisfaction is Up, Says J.D. Power

Even though reduced demand and fire-sale rates have forced hotels to cut staff and operating costs, hotel guest satisfaction is up, according to the annual J.D. Power and Associates survey. >>[Read Full Article](#)

Travel Promotion Act Gains Momentum

The U.S. Travel Association says the "Travel Promotion Act" now has the support of half the U.S. Senate. Sens. Arlen Specter, D-Pa., and Robert Bennett, R-Utah, ranking member of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, are the 50th and 51st senators to support the legislation. >>[Read Full Article](#)

Lawmakers Want Probe into Alleged Meeting Blacklisting

Eight members of Congress from Florida and Nevada have requested an investigation into allegations that government agencies are blacklisting certain cities and resort areas as meeting destinations. >>[Read Full Article](#)

International Visits Down 12% in May

The Department of Commerce says 3.8 million international visitors traveled to the U.S. in May, a decrease of 12 percent compared to May 2008. Total visitation in the first five months of 2009 was down 10 percent compared to the same period in 2008. >>[Read Full Article](#)

CVBs Using Twitter to Promote Destinations

More than 300 convention and visitors bureaus currently have Twitter accounts that they are using to market their destinations to potential visitors and community partners, according to a new report from New York-based destination marketing firm Development Counsellors International. >>[Read Full Article](#)

USTOA Making Case for Packaged Travel on TV, Radio

Every year, Bob Whitley, president of the U.S. Tour Operators Association, makes media appearances to promote packaged travel, but this year he made the rounds with a bigger mandate than in the past. >>[Read Full Article](#)

Calendar of Events

Visit www.ArizonaGuide.com to find information on all the exciting events, festivals and activities held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

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